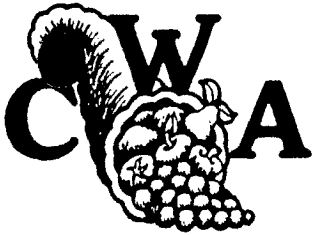


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## CALIFORNIA WOMEN FOR AGRICULTURE

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June 8, 1998

CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR - Public Comment

California Women for Agriculture is a non-profit, non-partisan organization with the goal of educating ourselves, legislators, and the public in matters that affect California's largest industry. Our 27 chapters throughout the State now have a membership totalling over 3,500. The Inland Empire Chapter represents the counties of San Bernardino and Riverside and has a current membership of 97.

We are submitting these comments for your consideration during the public review period of the subject Draft EIS/EIR. Our comments are specific to the potential fallowing of 400,000 to 600,000 acres of agricultural lands in the San Joaquin Valley in order to meet the intent of restoring the Bay-Delta ecosystem and increasing California's water supplies. The Bay-Delta solution must address the importance of a dependable water supply that will sustain agriculture throughout California.

The large-scale retirement and/or conversion of agricultural land and water as part of CALFED's solutions for the Bay-Delta will have enormous economic, social and environmental consequences. Ultimately, many of the proposals advanced by CALFED and the environmental community with respect to farmland retirement and conversion fail to satisfy CALFED's Solution Principles. Specifically, land retirement does not reduce conflicts because demands on the system will continue to exceed capacity. Retirement does not meet the test of equitability when the devastation of Central Valley agricultural production and rural economic activity are compared to uncertain and minimal environmental benefits. Land retirement is not affordable when viewed in the context of its impact on economic activity, employment and local governments. Finally, land retirement clearly violates the principle of "no significant redirected impacts".

We do not support any of the three alternatives under consideration in the Draft EIS/EIR as they present considerable and significant impact to California's agriculture. The intent of SB 900 and Proposition 204 was to reach a compromise position among the environmental, water, urban and agricultural interests of the State. We do not believe that agriculture's interests are best met by the

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proposed alternatives and request that an amended document be prepared for public review. California's number one industry is agriculture; albeit, the State's total economy is extremely reliant on our water resources. Compromise was reached in the early stages of developing the program supported by legislation; we request that the goals of the program be directed to meet the goals of water quality, water supply, and all of the State's major interests.

The Department of Water Resources current data on water supply indicates that urban uses constitute 11% of total demand, agriculture is 43%, and environmental is 46%. The major shareholders in our State's water supply need greater recognition, improved supply, and fewer impacts than provided by the current Bay-Delta program alternatives. We can only support a CALFED proposal that includes a balanced, integrated program, blending together the best elements to meet all the State's water supply needs, water quality objectives, and ecosystem restoration in the Delta.

California must sustain its vital agricultural economy. Taking ag land out of production to reduce the need for water will not solve California's water problems. CALFED's success in developing a fair deal for all Californians will directly determine our economic future.

Sincerely,

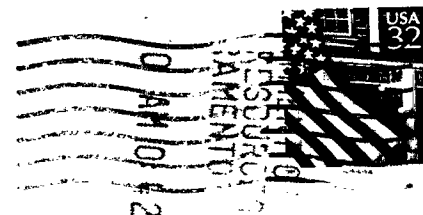



Cheryl A. Tubbs

President, Inland Empire Chapter



CALIFORNIA WOMEN FOR AGRICULTURE

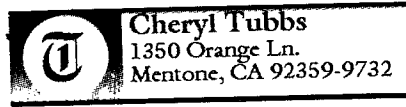


  
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